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closer to space 34, most of the sterilization of space 34 in fact would be effected by way of tortuous path 30.

Page 9, first full paragraph comprising lines 3-17:

The device of the instant invention, as best shown in Figs. 2, 5 and 6, has fitted about its neck 8 a collar 10, which in turn has attached thereto, by means of a hinge 42, a housing 12 that is pivotable from the position as shown in Fig. 5 to a position substantially along the length of the longitudinal axis 44 of the device. A number of mechanisms in the form of hooks 46 may be integrally provided in housing 12. Alternatively, corresponding locking mechanisms such as for example anchors and grasping fingers may be provided at the lower portion of housing 12 and either sleeve 14 or collar 10 so that once housing 12 is pivoted to the position as indicated by longitudinal axis 14, those coacting mechanisms would coact to fixedly retain housing 12 in the longitudinal direction, thereby enveloping needle or cannula 20. Of course, this is done after sheath 28 has been removed. The particulars of the coacting locking mechanisms at the housing 12 and collar 10 are disclosed in U.S. patent 5,469,622, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein.

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In the Claims

Please amend claim 6 as follows:

6. (Amended) Apparatus of claim 1, wherein said housing comprises at least one locking portion that coacts with at least another locking portion at said collar or said sleeve to fixedly retain said housing along a longitudinal axis of said holder to cover said one end of said needle after said sheath has been removed from said sleeve.

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Remarks

The following is a response to the Office Action dated November 13, 2002.

In response to the drawing objections, the examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the following.